

626 Squadron, RAF Wickenby.

15 March 1944

UM-P2

F/Sgt C R Marriott

Combat Report No. 11.

23.18hrs. 22,000ft. 30 miles south of target.

The Lancaster was attacked by a JU88 from the starboard quarter down, which opened fire at 600 yards. The rear gunner, Sgt J V Brewer, returned fire with a long burst. The aircraft was extensively hit. The enemy made a second attack from astern and up at 200 yards. The mid upper gunner, Sgt R Loughrey, returned fire but our aircraft was hit again by cannon and machine gun fire. The pilot then corkscrewed shaking off the attacker.

The damage included, intercom, R.T. and I.F.F out of action. Mid upper and rear turrets U/S including oxygen supply to both turrets. Tailplane, elevators and trim badly damaged and extensive damage to fuselage, astro dome and pilot's cockpit hood. No. 2 starboard petrol tank holed and both starboard propellers damaged. Immediately after the attack a fire started below the mid upper turret. This was extinguished by the mid upper gunner who then returned to his turret. The pilot decided to continue and bombed the target at 23.35hrs. After bombing the flight engineer, Sgt W A Willday, went back to the rear turret where the rear gunner stated he would carry on. He remained in his turret throughout the homeward trip operating the turret manually, although without oxygen and wounded in the left foot and ankle. He was also found on landing to be suffering from severe facial frostbite.

The flight engineer also found the mid upper gunner unconscious in his turret due to lack of oxygen and with the help of the wireless operator, Sgt G T Probert, succeeded in getting him on to the rest bed, where he remained unconscious during the return trip and for twelve hours after landing. He was also found to be wounded by splinters in the right foot.

On the homeward trip the bomb aimer, Sgt D F Brooker, alternated between his own position and the mid upper turret. The aircraft made a safe landing at Ford.